

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please amend claims 1 and 4-5 and add claims 18-21 as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method for modifying the surface of an article, said method comprising the steps of:

a) depositing at least a polyelectrolytic tie layer onto the surface of said article, wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is composed of (i) one layer of a first polyionic material which is adsorbed onto, heteropolarly bound onto, and/or entrapped on ~~not covalently attached to~~ the surface of the article or (ii) at least one layer of the first polyionic material which is adsorbed onto, heteropolarly bound onto, and/or entrapped on ~~not covalently attached to~~ the surface of the article and at least one layer of a second polyionic material having charges opposite of the charges of the first polyionic material, wherein said first and second polyionic materials have functional groups which provide reactive sites; and

b) covalently linking a layer of an active agent to said reactive sites, wherein the active agent is an anti-microbial agent or a polymerization initiator capable of initiating a radical polymerization of ethylenically unsaturated compounds, a polymeric initiator, a polymer, or a hydrophilic polymer, provided each of the polymer and hydrophilic polymer is different from any one of the first polyionic material and the second polyionic material.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein, in the step of depositing, two or more polyelectrolytic tie layers are successively deposited onto said article surface.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein, in the step of depositing, one polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited onto said article surface.

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited onto said article surface by contacting said article with one or more polyionic material solutions.

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 6 wherein said layer is deposited by dipping said article into a first solution comprising the first polyionic material having positive or negative charges, removing said article from said first solution, dipping said article into a second solution comprising the second polyionic material having charges that are opposite of the charges of the first polyionic material, and removing said article from said second solution.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 6 wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited onto said article surface by dipping said article into a solution comprising the first polyionic material and the second polyionic material and then removing said article from said solution.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 6 wherein said contacting occurs by spraying a solution onto the medical device.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited by spraying said article with a first solution comprising the first polyionic material having positive or negative charges and then spraying said article with a second solution comprising the second polyionic material having charges opposite of the charges of the first polyionic material.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited onto said article surface by spraying said article with a solution comprising the first polyionic material and the second polyionic material.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said article is a biomedical device.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein said biomedical device is a contact lens.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited onto said article surface by spin-coating said article.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited onto said article surface by chemisorption.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited onto said article surface by vapor deposition.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 6, wherein said polyelectrolytic tie layer is deposited onto the surface of said article by: (1) spraying said article with a first solution comprising the first polyionic material and then dipping said article into a second solution comprising the second polyionic material having charges opposite of the charges of the first polyionic material; or (2) dipping said article into the first solution comprising the first polyionic material and then spraying said article with the second solution comprising the second polyionic material having charges opposite of the charges of the first polyionic material.

18. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the active agent is a polymerization initiator capable of initiating a radical polymerization of ethylenically unsaturated compounds, and wherein the method further comprises the steps of: (c) contacting the initiator-modified article with a solution of a hydrophilic monomer or macromer; and (d) graft-polymerizing the hydrophilic monomer or macromer onto on the surface of the article.

19. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the step (c) is carried out by immersing the article in the solution or depositing a layer of the hydrophilic monomer or macromer on the initiator-modified article surface by dipping, spraying, spreading, knife coating, pouring, rolling, spin coating, or vacuum vapor depositing technique.

20. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the solution is a solution of a hydrophilic monomer selected from the group consisting of hydroxy-substituted C₂-C₄-alkyl acrylate, hydroxy-substituted C₂-C₄-alkyl -alkyl methacrylate, acryamide, methacryamide, N,N-di-C₁-C₄-alkyl acrylamide, N,N-di-C₁-C₄-alkyl methacrylamide, hydroxy-substituted C₂-C₄-alkyl acrylamide, hydroxy-substituted C₂-C₄-alkyl methacrylamide, hydroxy-substituted C₁-C₄-alkyl vinyl ether, 2-acrylamido-2-methylpropanesulfonic acid, N-vinylpyrrole, N-vinylsuccinimide, N-vinylpyrrolidone, 2-

vinylpyridine, 4-vinylpyridine, acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, mono-C₁-C₄-alkylamino-C₁-C₄-alkyl acrylate, mono-C₁-C₄-alkylamino-C₁-C₄-alkyl methacrylate, di-C₁-C₄-alkylamino-C₁-C₄-alkyl acrylate, di-C₁-C₄-alkylamino-C₁-C₄-alkyl methacrylates, and allylalcohol.

21. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the solution is a solution of a hydrophilic macromer.

22. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the active agent is an antimicrobial agent having a functional group capable of reacting with the functional groups of the first polyionic material and/or the second polyionic material.